

## CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH STORIES

### A CELEBRATION OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY HERITAGE PROJECTS

*From the wooded North Coast to the concrete-encased Los Angeles River... CCH Community Heritage Projects are revitalizing and enriching community life throughout California*

**T**he California Council for the Humanities has long promoted the strengthening of community life. In fact, the Council's first grant theme, in 1975, was "The Pursuit of Community in California." Twenty-six years of work have provided us with ample evidence that the Humanities have an essential role to play in helping us understand the connections between our individual lives and the worlds – the families, communities and institutions – in which we live and work.

Most recently, the results of an unprecedented three-year endeavor – the *California Community Heritage Initiative*, conducted between 1999 and 2001 – have demonstrated the power of public humanities programs to *transform lives and revitalize communities*. From Humboldt County to Oakland to Los Angeles, these exciting and innovative community heritage programs have brought both civic and environmental renewal to communities in crisis. Here are just a few examples of seven wonderfully dynamic efforts that have helped create exciting transformations in large and small communities throughout the state.

#### **Shifting Public Discourse — the Greening of the L.A. River Chinatown Yards through the Reenvisioning the Los Angeles River Project**

Prior to the launch of the *Reenvisioning the L.A. River* project, the fate of the languishing open space known alternately as the "Cornfields" or "Chinatown Yards" seemed sealed: The vacant lots that bordered the river would be developed into a new industrial area with the support of a major land developer and the mayor of Los Angeles.

However, through a dynamic array of cultural programs ranging from poetry readings to bike tours and film festivals, diverse citizen groups were able to raise questions about whether or not industrial development was the best use of precious public lands in an area of Los Angeles that had little green space to begin with. Toward the end of the project, a forum for mayoral candidates was held and surprisingly all had taken on the issue of the use of the Cornfields/Chinatown



*Born in Avile, Yemen, Abdullah Mohammed has lived in Oakland's Fruitvale district since 1967. His business has been at the same location in the heart of the district since 1983. Abdullah Mohammed's story is one of many stories told by the Fruitvale Community Heritage Project. Photo courtesy of the Peralta House and the Faces of Fruitvale Project.*

Yards, making clear that its fate was no longer sealed. Ultimately, HUD required an environmental impact report and the developer opted to sell the property to be developed as green space. As the project director put it, "The way the *L.A. Times* and different talk shows discussed and characterized the issues about the river, you could see how these ideas were changing throughout the project and how that was impacting this conflict."

Through the combined use of innovative cultural programming and public discussion, the L.A. River Project brought attention to a neglected and vital resource for L.A. residents, creating a forum for transformation.

#### **The Faces of Fruitvale Project — Proof that Diversity Does Not Have to Equal Discord**

The Oakland *Faces of Fruitvale* Project provided an innovative

vehicle for a community's residents to dramatically improve the conditions in which they live. Fruitvale, a neighborhood located in the heart of Oakland, has both the highest percentage of children and the lowest percentage of open space of any neighborhood in Oakland.

Yet in the center of Fruitvale sits six acres of open space through which flows Peralta Creek, and in the heart of that six acres sits a beautiful Victorian house, the Peralta Hacienda.

Three years ago, the open space was dominated by gang members, drug pushers, and sex offenders who often preyed on children from neighboring Calvin Simmons Middle School. The Victorian house stood vacant and vandalized – its broken windows and defaced front an all-too-public symbol of the communities' greatest challenges.

*Continued on page 2.*

## NEW GRANT GUIDELINES COMING

Next January, the California Council for the Humanities will announce the first phase of a new, statewide, multi-year public humanities initiative.

As part of this initiative, the Council is currently developing new grant guidelines, application forms, and application deadlines. These will be available on the CCH website ([www.calhum.org](http://www.calhum.org)) on Friday, March 1, 2002 and by U.S. mail one week later.

CCH will not accept major grant proposals and planning

grants under the old guidelines after the October 1, 2001 deadline. Applications for CCH quick grants will be accepted through December 1, 2001.

CCH staff and board members are currently working with current and new partner organizations throughout California to plan and develop the first set of initiative programs. Please watch future issues of the newsletter and visit our website ([www.calhum.org](http://www.calhum.org)) for more information on how you can participate.

# Network

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*The California Council for the Humanities is a state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Humanities Network is published quarterly and mailed to anyone who requests it from the San Francisco office.*



## CREATING COMMUNITY *Continued...*

When project director Holly Alonzo sought to create a usable, open space for the community in this environment, she knew that simply renovating the Peralta House would not be enough. Alonzo understood that the residents of Fruitvale, a uniquely diverse community which consists of 36 percent Latino/as, 32 percent African Americans, 20 percent Asian Americans, 9 percent European Americans, and 2 percent Native Americans, would need to come together to reclaim this area as their own.

So, with assistance from the Council, she developed the *Faces of Fruitvale* project, an unprecedented effort to engage residents in interviewing each other to collect and share their stories. Through the gathering and sharing of stories, the project was able to build bridges among long-time residents and newcomers, as well as among cultural and social service agencies. Stories also became the neutral field where which people and organizations that do not usually work together could rally.

know about it, they thought it was an abandoned house so they could just break the windows."

### ***Telling the Truth in a Small Town Leads to Stronger Community Bonds in Ukiah***

The *Good War Theater Project* of Ukiah – which ultimately became *Telling the Truth in a Small Town* – began when project director Kate Magruder invited residents to participate in a stage adaptation of Studs Terkel's *The Good War*. Magruder hoped the project would inspire neighbors to begin sharing their own experiences of World War II, but she didn't anticipate just how far the desire to share personal history and experience would reach into the greater community. The eclectic first cast consisted of both veteran and first time actors – people of all ages and backgrounds including a Potter Valley high school sophomore, a Vietnam War veteran and a 75-year-old retired business executive who had served on a destroyer in the Pacific during WWII.



*Yurok elder Walt Lara, Sr. participated in the Living Biographies program. In his interview, Lara spoke eloquently about the need for tribes to have their sacred dance regalia and human remains returned from museums. Here, he talks about regalia used by men in the Brush Dance ceremony, which is held every year.*

The park and the Victorian house became the center of the project, and eventually the stories from neighbors throughout Fruitvale were displayed in an exhibit that decorated every wall in every room of the beautifully renovated house. As a result, the Victorian house and the park were transformed from an ugly symbol of an often-fractured community to a site of pride in the neighborhood.

Two years since the launch of the project, the neighborhood crime rate has dropped, the house has become a community gathering center, and the accompanying garden, tended by the Lao Family Center, is a beautiful symbol of community renewal.

One participant said, "Ever since the children started knowing that this was a place of neighborhood stories, it seems like automatically they start coming back and saying 'This is an important place.' And they know it. Because they didn't

Before rehearsal even started, cast members began to tell their personal stories. A Vietnam veteran shared about how old films depicting the glory of World War II inspired him to join the Marines right out of high school – only to find himself experiencing a war and homecoming vastly different from the romantic images of his childhood. Another woman, whose parents had met in labor camps in Eastern Europe, spoke of how the starvation and deprivation of the camps had colored and shaped her mother's sense of the world and, by extension, her own.

Eventually, a new theater piece, *Telling the Truth in a Small Town*, emerged, centered around the personal stories of residents. What began as a small theater project quickly grew into a community-wide effort to tell and hear the stories of neighbors, friends and family members, all eager to share

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## COURAGE, COMPASSION AND CARING

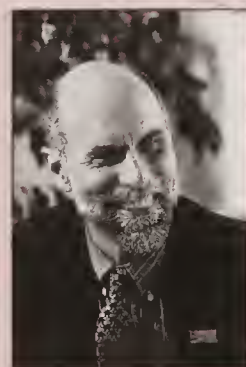
**By James Quay**  
Executive Director

We have all seen images, terrible, terrible images, of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> that will stay with us the rest of our lives. Here are some images from September 12<sup>th</sup> that have stayed with me.

*A young Arab American woman boards a bus and says "Good morning!" in a cheerful voice made too loud by her nervousness.*

*The young Arab American man who normally is at the register of a local sandwich shop is now making sandwiches in the back, out of sight.*

*Tiny strips of paper are scattered on the floor of a BART train headed for San Francisco. Someone who apparently thinks hate literature is despicable, has printed out the message "The Koran is hate literature," thereby creating an example of the hate literature that he supposedly despises.*



*Photo by Jason Dwyer*

call for calm, careful to caution against scapegoating and demonizing anyone, and careful not to victimize more innocent people with actions caused by fear and anger. President Bush put it well in his speech before Congress: "We're in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith."

CCH was created around two defining principles: that a strong democracy requires informed and frequent public deliberation and that the insights and perspectives of

the humanities have a powerful role to play in that deliberation. So our way of living by our principles is to encourage community discussion and to help place the humanities at the center of those discussions. We all need knowledge in areas where we are ignorant—about Islam or the Koran, for example. We need historical

perspective in areas where we think we are eager to act—about our own responses to such attacks in the past, for example, or the ethical judgments of other religions and cultures.

CCH has created a fund, the 911 Community Dialogue Fund, to provide grants of up to \$1500 to organizations holding public programs which provide Californians with thoughtful perspectives from the humanities as they decide how to respond to their neighbors in a time of unprecedented uncertainty and fear caused by acts of terrorism. We want to help strengthen the voices of compassion and civility in communities all over California by placing some of the intellectual resources of colleges and universities at the public's service. A fuller description of the fund is found elsewhere in this newsletter.

By almost any measure, September 11, 2001 was the darkest day in American history. There is, sadly, nothing any of us can do to change this dreadful example of the worst that human beings are capable of. Fortunately, what some Americans did on September 11<sup>th</sup> and after has shown the world the best of what human beings are capable of: the extraordinary courage of emergency personnel, the quiet compassion of blood donors, the outpouring of support from Americans near and far. Their examples have helped balance the darkness and horror of September 11<sup>th</sup> with images of light and admiration. And they challenge each of us to demonstrate the same courage, compassion and caring to our Muslim and Arab American neighbors.

There's nothing any of us can do to erase the images of September 11<sup>th</sup>. We can do something about the images of September 12<sup>th</sup>. What we can do is to embody the part of America no terrorist act can destroy: the human values that bring people here from all over the world. Not by the spending the wealth symbolized by the World Trade Center. Not the exercising the power symbolized by the Pentagon. Rather by caring about potential victims the way those amazing New York city emergency personnel are caring about their fallen comrades. By making sure they are not abandoned.

Just two weeks ago, the Council approved a modest planning grant for Islamic Networks, Inc. to help them plan a traveling exhibit and public program to educate the public about Islamic civilization and its contributions to contemporary California. They wrote that "despite the rich and invaluable contributions of Islamic civilization, Muslims today are one of the most stereotyped and vilified people in the United States." They want to counter the widespread stereotypes found largely in the media and Hollywood films with knowledge. Their aim is "to educate, inform and correct misconceptions about Islam, leading to mutual understanding and acceptance of Muslims as an integral part of mainstream society in America."

I fear the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> will make the vilification more intense and the job of education even more important.

Every public and religious spokesperson I have heard of seen quoted so far has been careful to





# RESPONDING TO TERRORISM: COUNCIL LAUNCHES “911 COMMUNITY DIALOGUE FUND”

To assist cultural, civic, and faith-based organizations across the state to build bridges of understanding and mutual commitment to strong communities in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Council has established the “911 Community Dialogue Fund Grant Program.” The resulting public forums are designed to bring all members of the community together to fashion humane local responses to the fear and anger that acts of terrorism create. If your organization wishes to apply for one of these grants, please follow the guidelines and application procedures outlined below.

**WHAT WE’RE DOING AND WHY**

Sixty years ago, tens of thousands of American citizens of Japanese ancestry were forced into camps in the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor, an act now officially acknowledged as a terrible mistake. CCH has funded projects which explore the sad history of the Japanese American internment. Now, in order to help avoid similar mistakes in the aftermath of terrorist attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup>, CCH is creating a fund to promote public education and dialogue about the domestic response to these terrible events.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

The 911 Community Dialogue Fund will make available grants of up to \$1500 for public programs which provide Californians with thoughtful perspectives from the humanities as they decide how to respond to their neighbors in a time of unprecedented uncertainty and fear caused by acts of terrorism. Examples of relevant perspectives include histories of inter-group relationships on the home front during wartime, broadened understanding of Islam and Arabic cultures, ethical perspectives on violence and terrorism, and the role of language and media in shaping public understanding. The emphasis of programs supported by this special fund is not to provide a debate of competing analyses about why September 11<sup>th</sup> happened, but to offer the community a range of perspectives which will inform an appropriate community response and dispel

the ignorance that encourages hate crimes and divisive stereotyping.

**BASIC REQUIREMENTS**

- The program must encourage audience discussion and allow time for dialogue.
- At least one humanities scholar must be involved in the planning and implementation of the program.
- The program must be accessible and open to participation by the general public and seek to bring together an audience representative of the local area community.

**GUIDELINES**

Please submit your request in the form of a letter of no more than two single-spaced pages which should address each of the six points outlined below. Please number and label your responses to correspond to these points.

**1. Project description:** Briefly describe your project, the humanities themes you hope to address, and how you will encourage dialogue around the issues raised.

**2. Scholar involvement:** List the scholar(s), with a brief bio, who will be involved in the project. If you can not reach scholars at your college or university, please contact a CCH Program Officer at the nearest CCH office listed below. CCH has a list of scholars who are ready to participate in the program.

**3. Schedule of events:** Provide a detailed schedule of events with specific location(s) – including a brief program description, dates, times,

street, and city, with contact information – and the Project Director’s name, phone number, and e-mail address for further information.

**4. Publicity plan:** Describe your target audience(s) and how you intend to inform them about the project and encourage their participation. CCH encourages you to publicize in a way that will broaden the reach of the project to audiences not usually served by your organization.

**5. Description of the sponsoring organization:** Provide a brief description of the nonprofit organization or municipal or state agency that will be the sponsor of the project. Please also list this organization’s address and the person who should receive the notification, and the Congressional and California Assembly district in which the events are occurring.

**6. Budget:** Construct a two-column budget showing how you will use Council funds and local resources to plan and implement your project (See sample budget below).

*Please Note:* Refreshments are not eligible for CCH support, but are appropriate to list as a cost share. Your request should be matched with an equivalent amount of in-kind or cash contributions from your institution and/or other local partners.

**SUBMISSION**

Applications will be reviewed every two weeks beginning October 8th until funds are exhausted. All applications must be received in the San Francisco office by 5pm on these dates. All notifications will be made within two weeks of submission. Proposals can be sent electronically to [Lnguyen@calhum.org](mailto:Lnguyen@calhum.org) or mailed to:

**911 Community Dialogue Fund  
California Council for the Humanities  
312 Sutter Street, Suite 601  
San Francisco, CA 94108**

Further inquiries regarding this 911 Community Dialogue Fund and how to connect with humanities scholars and writers can be directed to the CCH Program Staff in your area.

S A M P L E B U D G E T		
Description	CCH Funds Requested	Share Local Cost
Project Administration (not more than 25% of the request)	\$350.00	\$500.00
Humanities scholar honorarium	\$300.00	
Travel, lodging, and per diem for scholars	\$200.00	\$100.00
Program expenses (use of venue, rental of equipment, design & printing of discussion guides, and documentation of project)	\$250.00	\$700.00
Publicity expenses (advertising, printing, mailing, and distribution of publicity materials)	\$400.00	\$200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>



## CREATING COMMUNITY *Continued...*

their experiences of how World War II has shaped their understanding of the world and relations with people. The performances grew to incorporate audience participation and, eventually, newspaper features, discussion groups, exhibits, school projects and radio programs.

As Magruder said, *The Good War* project sparked “a community dialogue between parents, children, neighbors, and people in local grocery stores. Questions were asked that had never been asked before. There seemed to be a sense in the community that we did this together, that we’d broken something open—the fear of telling each other our own stories.”

**California Indian Stories Help Create a More Inclusive Community Narrative - the *Living Biographies* project of Humboldt County**

Humboldt County is home to the vital California Indian cultures of the Hoopa, Karuk, Tolowa Wiyot and Yurok tribes. Yet, to many outside of the Indian communities of the area, these peoples are seen in stereotypical terms or, worse yet, not seen at all. When project coordinator Chag Lowry became involved with the *Living Biographies Project* of Humboldt County he helped the project to realize two ambitious goals: First, to create awareness of the Native Northcoast community among non-Native peoples. Second, to offer tribal youth an opportunity to learn about their own culture – the wisdom of their elders, their vanishing languages, and the traditions that struggle to survive against enormous odds.

So Lowry involved young people in interviewing over 32 living Elders, representing each of the existing area tribes. Then, working

with the young videographers and KEET professionals, the project produced eleven separate half-hour programs that brought the stories of the Elders and their rich culture to the general viewing audience.

In fact, many now say that the *Living Biographies Community Heritage Project* brought contemporary Indian voices in front of the people of Humboldt County for the first time. One participant noted that “for a community that may have not seen Indians other than on TV killing people or among the ten most wanted in the county...a native talking about how great the culture is...it’s positive, not only for the native community but for the entire community.”

For the young videographers, the project opened the door to a new appreciation for what their elders have to teach them about their history and culture. Said one young

participant, “I think we need to listen to what our elders have to say, they know a lot. I’ve done a lot of interviews now and I still am amazed that I got to meet these people. It’s very special.”

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Other projects such as *Traditions in Transition* in the Central Valley, the *Goleta Community Heritage Project* in Goleta Valley and the *Boyle Heights Community Heritage Project* in Los Angeles offer similarly inspiring accounts of community bonds built through shared stories and the increased understanding that results. As we look to the future, each of these seven innovative programs has something to teach us about how cultural activities, and the sharing of stories in particular, can ignite a sense of shared purpose and commitment to people and place that can only change our world for the better.



## FALL Calendar

The public humanities programs listed on these pages were either created or supported by the California Council for the Humanities. Please note that dates and times should be confirmed with the local sponsors. These listings are often provided to CCH well before final arrangements are made.

Please also check the monthly calendar listings on the Council's world wide web pages at <http://www.calhum.org>.

### EXHIBITS

**Thru Dec. 31** "Defining a Californian Style" is an exhibition about the buildings designed by James Edward Allison and David Clark Allison. Old Courthouse Museum, 211 W. Santa Ana Boulevard, Santa Ana. 714/834-3703.

**Thru Dec. 2** The Hi-Desert Nature Museum hosts "Salt Dreams: Reflections from the Downstream West." Photographer Joan Myers spent 12 years documenting the physical realities of the Salton Sea, and searched for the historical roots, environmental lessons, and spiritual suggestions of the sea and its neighboring communities. This is a traveling exhibit of Myers' photographs paired with environmental writer William deBuys' interpretive text. Hi-Desert Nature Museum in Yucca Valley, 57116 Twentynine Palms Highway, Yucca Valley. 760/369-7212.

**Thru Nov. 19** In the "Awakening from the California Dream" exhibit, Robert Dawson's photographs and Gray Brechin's texts explore the history behind, and the possible hopes for averting California's environmental crisis. Community Memorial Museum, 1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City. 530/822-7141.

**Nov. 12 - Dec. 12** "Votes for Women: Unfinished Business," a CERA-sponsored traveling exhibition, chronicles women's struggle for political equality in the United States. Ojai Valley Museum, 130 West Ojai Avenue, Ojai. 805/640-1390 ext. 1.

**Thru Jan. 6** "Gold Fever! Untold Stories of the California Gold Rush" is the Council-commissioned, multidimensional traveling exhibit about the California Gold Rush, adapted from the Oakland Museum's major "Gold Fever!" exhibit. First Bible Church, Rochester, NY. 716/225-3493.

**Dec. 3 - Jan. 28** The "Awakening from the California Dream" exhibit moves to the Chico Museum, 141 Salem Street, Chico. 530/891-4336.

**Dec. 15 - Feb. 9** The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History hosts "Salt Dreams: Reflections from the Downstream West." Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History, 1305 Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz. 831/420-6118.

**Feb. 4 - Apr. 1** "The Whole World's Watching: Peace and Social Justice Movements of the 1960s & 1970s," an exhibition of documentary photography, examines the rich history of the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. With a focus on Northern California where many of these activities were born, distinguished photographers illuminate the rise of the Black Panthers, the Free-Speech and Anti-war Movements, feminism, disability rights, environmental activism, the struggle for gay rights and the cultural milieu which formed and informed them. San Joaquin County Historical Museum, 11793 North Micke Grove Road, Lodi. 209/331-2055.

**Feb. 6 - Mar. 6** "Walls of Heritage, Walls of Pride: African American Murals" is the first exhibition ever assembled of historic and contemporary murals created by African American artists across the country. Using large photographs, original preparatory drawings, paintings and sculptures by the muralists, this important exhibit will showcase an impressive body of 20<sup>th</sup> century African American murals—many of which no longer exist. The primary focus will be on the past thirty years of mural art, with a special emphasis on community-based work located in Southern California. The University Art Gallery, California State University Dominguez Hills, 1000 E. Victoria Street, Carson. 310/243-3334.

### EVENTS

**Nov. 3** Scholar/performer Susheel Bibbs portrays **Mary Ellen Pleasant**, who was born a slave and became known as the "Mother of Civil Rights in California" in a Chautauqua presentation. 2:00 p.m. Napa Valley Museum, 55 Presidents Circle, Yountville. 707/944-0500



"25 mph, Salton Sea, California." From "Salt Dreams: Reflections from the Downstream West." (See current exhibit listing. Photo copyright by Joan Myers.)



**Nov. 3 - 4** "Living on Land: Historical Perspectives of San Luis Obispo County Agriculture, 1900-2000" is a two-day community forum that brings the perspective of humanists, agriculturalists, and interested citizens to bear on the future of the Central Coastal growing region of San Luis Obispo County. Forum activities will place the county's agriculture in a broader context, and activities include lunchtime group discussions, live performances of historic agriculture music, a presentation by an agriculture historian, and a panel of local agriculturalists who will reflect on their own times and invite the audience's comments. On the second day, participants will go on self-guided tours of agricultural history sites. 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. both days. Cuesta Community College, San Luis Obispo. 805/549-9283.

**Nov. 4** The Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library hosts the first of two public performances of the documentary **"We Served with Pride, the Chinese American Experience in WWII."** The program includes a brief introduction by Mr. Montgomery Hom, a military historian and executive producer of the documentary, a showing of the film, and a discussion of the film and the impact WWII had on the social and cultural history of Chinese Americans. A brief reception will follow to thank local WWII veterans who will be in attendance. 1:30-3:30 p.m. Cesar Chavez Central Library, 650 N. El Dorado Street, Stockton. 209/937-8639.

**Nov. 5** This is the second public performance of **"We Served with Pride, the Chinese American Experience in WWII."** 2:00-4:00 p.m. Venue TBA, Stockton. 209/937-8639.

**Nov. 15** **"Factories in the Field"** features speaker Glenda Matthews, a showing of the film **"The Fight in the Fields,"** and a student panel discussion. This event is part of *Through Steinbeck's Eyes: Witness to the Twentieth Century*. This year-long series echoes Steinbeck's championing of the common person and his engagement with the major public questions of his time. 4:00-7:00 p.m. Center for Steinbeck Studies, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose. 408/924-4588.

**Nov. 17** **"Factories in the Field"** features speaker Glenda Matthews, dramatic readings by the Western Stage, and a panel discussion of Dust Bowl Migrants. This event is part of *Through Steinbeck's Eyes: Witness to the Twentieth Century*. 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. National Steinbeck Center, One Main Street, Salinas. 831/775-4730.



Father and daughter on Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley in the early '70s. From **"The Whole World's Watching."** (see Feb. 4 listing. Photo copyright by Nacio Jan Brown.)

**Nov. 17** In conjunction with their **"Third Annual Cine Mexicano: Mexican Film Series,"** the Media Arts Center San Diego hosts **"Legend of Cine Mexicano,"** a film series celebrating Mexico's most famous movie stars. Today's topic, **"Tin Tan: Tan Talento,"** will focus on the artistic and cultural legacy of one of Mexico's greatest film personalities-Tin Tan (German Valdes). Scholar Fred Dobb moderates the discussion. Celebrating Mexico's rich history of the *tardeado*, this program will be preceded by entertainment, family activities, and light refreshments. 5:15 p.m. Mann Hazard Center 7, San Diego Mission Valley.

**Nov. 17** The Japanese American National Library presents the last of a series of three programs on **"The Role of Ethnic Identity"** in shaping individual and community life among Japanese Americans. It focuses on how Nisei (second generation) farmers dealt with World War II incarceration and re-establishing their farms after returning from internment camps. Panelists include Japanese American farmers. 1:30-4:00 p.p. Sacramento Japanese United Methodist Church, 6929 Franklin Blvd, Sacramento. 415/567-5006.

**Nov. 18** The San Diego Public Library presents a screening of the CCH-funded documentary **"Tell the Truth and Run: George Seldes and the American Press"** followed by a discussion led by Dr. Henry L. Janssen, as part of CCH's Film and Speaker Program. Eighty years a newspaperman, Seldes was a noted foreign correspondent who became America's most important press critic. 2:00-5:00 p.m. San Diego Public Library, 820 E Street, San Diego. 619/236-5847.

**Dec. 6** **"Travels with Steinbeck: A Perspective of America in the 1960s"** features speakers Gail Jardine and Scot Guenter and a showing of the film **"America and the Americans."** This event is part of *Through Steinbeck's Eyes*. 4:00-7:00 p.m. Center for Steinbeck Studies, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose. 408/924-4588.

**Dec. 6** The Independent Documentary Group (IDG) presents the **"Traveling Environmental Film Festival"** in conjunction with the CCH sponsored exhibition, *Awakening from the California Dream*. Each of the public programs include a screening of IDG's Emmy-Award-winning films about the San Francisco Bay/Delta and Greenbelt, and a discussion led by a local Humanities scholar. IDG's festival films include ***Secrets of the Bay, Treasures of the Greenbelt, Partners of the Land, Heron Island, Kids by the Bay, and San Pablo Baylands.*** Chico Museum, 141 Salem Street, Chico. 530/891-4336.

**Dec. 9** **"Travels with Steinbeck: A Perspective of America in the 1960s"** features journalist and social activist David Harris, a showing of the film **"Travels with Charley,"** and dramatic readings by the Western Stage. This event is part of *Through Steinbeck's Eyes*. 2:00-5:00 p.m. National Steinbeck Center, One Main Street, Salinas. 831/775-4730.

**Jan. 26** **"Steinbeck's Writing Process"** features a talk by author Louis Owens, a writer's workshop with Barnaby Conrad, and dramatic readings by the Western Stage. This event is part of *Through Steinbeck's Eyes*. 2:00-4:00 p.m. National Steinbeck Center, One Main Street, Salinas. 831/775-4730.

**Jan. 31** **"Steinbeck's Writing Process"** features a second talk by author Louis Owens. Center for Steinbeck Studies, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose. 408/924-4588.

**Feb. 5** In conjunction with the exhibit **"Walls of Heritage, Walls of Pride: African American Murals,"** humanities scholar Robin Dunitz presents a 40-minute slide lecture on the history of African American murals. An audience discussion will follow. 1:30 p.m. Santa Monica Public Library, 1343 6th Street, Santa Monica. 310/458-8600.

**Feb. 9** In conjunction with the exhibit **"Walls of Heritage, Walls of Pride,"** a bus tour will visit sites in Watts and Compton including Dollarhide Community Center, the Watts Towers and Watts Labor Community Action Committee. Tour leaders, Robin Dunitz and Cecil Ferguson, will use local narrative murals to reveal the little known history of the area's black community and will actively engage the audience in discussion. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Tony Roma's Restaurant, South Bay Pavilion, 20700 Avalon Boulevard, Carson. 310/243-3334.

**Feb. 9** **"The Wayward Bus Tours"** will take participants to locations that played a significant role in Steinbeck's life and work and will also include knowledgeable tour guides who will share the significance and history of the various sites. This tour will go to Stanford University. This event is part of *Through Steinbeck's Eyes*. 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Center for Steinbeck Studies, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose. 408/924-4588.



# Humanities News

## Hearst Foundation Grants \$150,000 to CCH

The William Randolph Hearst Foundation has awarded \$150,000 to the Council to support the California Exhibition Resources Alliance (CERA). The grant ensures that CERA will continue to develop and circulate high quality museum exhibitions and their accompanying public programs. CERA, a special program of the Council, is a leadership network of small to mid-sized professionally operated museums that present humanities exhibitions and public programs throughout California.

## Weingart Foundation Awards \$50,000 to CCH

The Council has also received a grant for \$50,000 from the Weingart Foundation in Los Angeles. The award supports the MOTHEREAD program. MOTHEREAD is the Council's Los Angeles-based family literacy effort. Working with community social service agencies, the program teaches mothers and fathers to read and discuss stories with their children, strengthening family ties and helping children become better readers and better learners.

## CCH Grantee Recognized at Silver Lake Film Festival

Bert Atkinson, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, was voted one of three finalists in the screenwriting competition at the Silver Lake Film Festival in Los Angeles. His screenplay, *Charles Fletcher Lummis: Lion of the Southwest*, received a grant from the California Council for the Humanities last year. The script traces the dramatic and adventurous life of Charles Fletcher Lummis, the West's "first multiculturalist." Lummis, a man who "crammed the work of three or four lifetimes into his 68 years," was a journalist, magazine publisher, author, photographer, explorer, archaeologist and preservationist in the American Southwest. Says Atkinson, "Charles Fletcher Lummis created and defined the mythic image of the Southwest and California for the rest of the nation." Atkinson is currently raising production funding for the project.

## CCH Board to Meet in December in San Francisco

The California Council for the Humanities' next quarterly board meeting will be held on Friday, December 14 in San Francisco. For additional information, please contact the Council's San Francisco office at 415/391-1474.

## New Staff Members at CCH



**Selena Hsu** is a Bay Area native who joined the CCH San Francisco staff on July 30 as the executive assistant. Selena received her B.A. in history from Stanford University in 2001. While at Stanford, she was station manager at KZSU-FM, the university's non-commercial radio station. In addition to her work for CCH, she remains the music genre director for KZSU-FM and works in the history section of Borders Books & Music. Selena sees herself pursuing a career in non-commercial radio broadcasting someday, and looks forward to studying broadcasting in graduate school. She is also fluent in both Mandarin and Spanish.

**Lucy Le Nguyen** also recently joined the Council's San Francisco staff as grants administrator. Her journey began in Hawaii, where she attended high school, and continued at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she earned a B.A. in history. Lucy studied in England for one year at the University of Kent while pursuing a minor in sociology. After working in a law office and in Boston's JFK Library, she earned her Master's Degree in American history at Boston College, and joined the CCH staff on August 27. Lucy is fluent in conversational Vietnamese.



**David Willwerth** joined the CCH San Francisco staff as operations assistant on September 19. He received his B.A. in political science from U.C. Berkeley in 2001. As an undergraduate, he studied in Denmark at the University of Copenhagen. He has lived in Mexico and Thailand for several years as well, picking up Spanish and Danish along the way. David enjoys traveling and tennis and has always wanted to work for a non-profit organization. He is still deciding whether he would make a good lawyer or teacher, or neither.

**NEH Convenes for Jefferson Day** — The National Humanities Alliance will convene in Washington for Jefferson Day to promote support for the National Endowment for the Humanities. In recent years, NEH programs have been seriously under-funded, hampering the agency's ability to fulfill its mission to Americans. Grassroots advocacy and active participation in Jefferson Day will strengthen the case to leaders in Washington for increased federal support for the humanities through NEH. Visit <http://www.nhalliance.org/jd/index.html#jd> for more info.

## "News You Can Use,"

"*News You Can Use*," a feature of CCH's **California Humanities Network** ([www.thinkcalifornia.net/news](http://www.thinkcalifornia.net/news)), is a digest of recent political developments, funding opportunities, announcements, and other news of interest to individuals and organizations engaged in cultural public programming in California. Visit our website regularly for weekly updates, and sign-up on-line to receive our free, monthly e-mail newsletter of highlights, *CHN-Update*.

## Critical Essays on World Trade Center Disaster Available Online

— The Teaching Committee of H-NET (Humanities and Social Sciences Online), an international interdisciplinary organization of scholars and teachers dedicated to developing the enormous educational potential of the Internet and the World Wide Web, will publish recently submitted essays enabling teachers and scholars to place the events of Sept. 11 in historical perspective for American students. The essays will cover a wide range of topics, including: "The History of Western Involvement in the Middle East and Near East," "The Treatment of Terrorism in Literature," "The History of Alternatives to Military Action," and "An Introduction to the History and Beliefs of Islam." Refer to <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/> for more details.

## Brown University Researchers to Launch Online "Sept. 11"

**Q. & A.** — To help teachers (primarily high school teachers) raise the issues surrounding the Sept. 11 attacks in a constructive context and to promote open dialogue about future policy directions, the Choices for the 21st Century Education Project at Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies has posted curricular resources to its web site at <http://www.choices.edu/Sept11/top.html>. The policy options presented in these materials are also incorporated into community discussion materials produced by the Study Circles Resource Center, a national program based in Connecticut which promotes community-based discussion. Visit <http://www.studycircles.org/pages/americaresponds.html> to join a discussion.

**New Yorkers Question Future of the Arts/Humanities** — Over \$10 million in art was lost on September 11, reports the *New York Times*, and the rebuilding project has prompted many arts and humanities professionals to rethink the role of public art in New York. Tom Eccles, head of Manhattan's Public Art Fund, remarked: "It will certainly change the nature of the projects we do. For years we moved away from the concept of public art as a memorial. Now it will be difficult to be humorous or ironic. Public life in New York City will be under a cloud for a very long time. That's something we have to be conscious of." (NY Times, September 19, The Arts/Cultural Desk section)

**Los Angeles Adjusts Artistic Output** — A major hub of California arts and humanities programming, Los Angeles has also been forced to rethink the role of its public art because of September 11. Producers, performers and filmmakers, according to the *Los Angeles Times* (9/26), are choosing to incorporate a more "respectful, united and sober tone" into their work, and much of the standard format has already been jettisoned. The question of self-censorship is being raised at the same time, as artists and entertainers adjust the content of their work to fit their interpretation of the national mood. Additionally, many arts and humanities performers living in Los Angeles will soon find a greater volume of work available, due to the general unwillingness for many from other parts of the country to fly to L.A. Visit <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-092601brian.story> for more details.

## California Arab-Americans Eager for Constructive Dialogue

— The phones at Arab American organizations across California are ringing off the hook, reports the *San Jose Mercury News*, because of so many individuals seeking a constructive dialogue within their community. Before the Sept. 11 attacks the California Muslim community was "focused inward," but now hundreds of Muslims across California are calling in to humanities organizations, convening teach-ins on college campuses, and generally getting more involved in their communities "in order to reach out to non-Muslims and give them a crash course in Islam 101." See <http://www0.mercurycenter.com/premium/local/docs/galvanize27a.htm> for more information. (San Jose Mercury News, 9/27/01, Local & State section)



# Membership and Development News

## Join the Council today and help support the 911-Californians Connected Fund for Community Dialogue.

When you join the California Council for the Humanities Friends of the Humanities today with a 2001-2002 membership gift, you will help ensure that we can continue offering the kind of important and vital programming that you have read about in this and other issues of Humanities Network, including:

### The 911 – CALIFORNIANS CONNECTED Fund for Community Dialogue.

The Council has established the CALIFORNIANS CONNECTED Fund to help cultural, civic and faith-based organizations across the state build bridges of understanding and mutual commitment to strong communities as we deal with the aftermath of the tragedy that occurred on September 11.

If you choose to contribute to CCH at this time, you'll be helping us sponsor public forums throughout California designed to bring all members of the community together.

#### STOCK CONTRIBUTIONS

##### — A CONVENIENT AND BENEFICIAL WAY TO GIVE.

Making a charitable donation in the form of stocks and/or bonds is a popular and convenient mode of giving. A gift of stock can provide much-needed support for the Council and offer you financial benefits as well.

If you are interested in making a contribution in the form of a stock donation, please contact Julie Levak, Director of Development by phone (415/391-1474, ext. 304) or email ([jlevak@calhum.org](mailto:jlevak@calhum.org))

*These  
forums  
will:*

- ❖ Use education and dialogue to create a deeper understanding of the historical, philosophical, and religious underpinnings that brought us to September 11, 2001.
- ❖ Involve organizations interested in fostering cross-cultural dialogue and humanities scholars — experts in history, philosophy, comparative religion, and area studies — willing and able to bring perspective to the issues of the day.
- ❖ Provide communities throughout California with the opportunity to *fashion a humane response to the fear and anger that acts of terrorism create.*

*Just send in the coupon with your membership gift, or call Julie Levak, Director of Development at: 415/391-1474. Ext. 304*

*Please send your tax-deductible membership gift, made payable to the CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES, to:*

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# CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES

The humanities explore human histories, cultures and values. They inform the conversations that are vital to a thriving democracy. They provide a context for people to understand one another. They constitute our most important human inheritance.

The purpose of the California Council for the Humanities is to create a state in which all Californians have lifelong access to this shared inheritance. The Council's mission is to enrich California's cultural life and to strengthen communities through the public use of the humanities. The Council is an independent state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and operates as a public-private partnership rather than as a governmental agency.

Council programs include the California Exhibition Resources Alliance (CERA), which provides means for member museums to share exhibits and programming efforts; MOTHEREAD, a family literacy program in Los Angeles County; and the California Humanities Network, a network of organizations that create and disseminate humanities programs for the general public.

In addition, the Council conducts a competitive grants program. Since 1975, it has awarded more than \$18 million to more than 2,100 non-profit organizations, enabling them to produce compelling exhibits, film and radio programs, and lecture series and conferences on topics of importance to Californians.

The Council is currently planning a multi-year, statewide initiative, tentatively titled *My Story is California's Story*. It is designed to encourage Californians from all walks of life to share their unique and diverse stories - with each other, with their communities, and with the public at large. To ensure a focus that will both invite diversity and display commonalities, the Council is enlisting a broad network of cultural and civic organizations throughout the state to plan this initiative. The initiative will offer unprecedented opportunities to bring the full power of innovative programming to promote dialogue and to demonstrate the capacity of cultural events to strengthen communities.

The Council is an independent, not-for-profit organization. It is supported by grants from NEH, corporations and foundations, and by contributions from individuals. Visit the Council online at [www.calhum.org](http://www.calhum.org).

Page proofs for this publication were created on equipment donated by Apple Computer.

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**NEXT PROPOSAL DEADLINE: To be announced**

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Fall 2001 • Volume 23 / Number 4

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